

THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



CALIFORNIA
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

OCT 25 2007

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Christmas Count Season Is Here

That season of the year has arrived again—it's time to participate in Golden Gate Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count. Sign up now for an enjoyable day of birding that ends with a delicious dinner where we report results from the field, including the locations of the unusual species found that day.

Invitations to the two counts—Sunday, December 16, in Oakland and Thursday, December 27, in San Francisco—have been sent to everyone who participated in either count in recent years. San Francisco co-compiler Dan Murphy urges everyone to reply right away. "Signing up early really helps the compilers ensure that every area is well covered," Dan says. "We welcome all birders, no matter what their experience level."

This season marks the 108th year of Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs). CBCs aim to identify and count the birds within a defined 15-mile-diameter circle during one calendar day. Last year more than 50,000 participants took part in more than 2,000 counts held worldwide, including 118 in California alone. Thanks to the National Audubon Society, the results of all counts since 1900 are accessible at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/hr/. Researchers and bird-watchers use the data to study changes in resident bird populations.

The Oakland count circle extends from

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Least California Terns and chick at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge.

Tern Watch Volunteers Protect Alameda Colony

The Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR) and Golden Gate Audubon began a new program called Tern Watch last spring, in an attempt to safeguard the colony of endangered California Least Terns in Alameda from predation. The program was modeled after a similar successful plan at Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge in Southern California, where California Least Terns also suffer from heavy predation.

Because of their diminutive size and preference for open spaces in breeding sites, just about every predator will prey on terns and their young: hawks, falcons, owls, mammals of numerous species, and even ants. It is tough to be a tern parent or chick, which might indicate why some desperate parents years ago staked out a triangular plot of tarmac on the runways of the former U.S. Navy air base in the first place. In 2006, the colony suffered from heavy predation. Although refuge biologists counted 441 nests that season, they estimated that only 79 chicks fledged. Burrowing Owls and other predators harmed the colony's success, and none of the young terns were observed leaving the colony enclosure.

This year, after Tern Watch training sessions in April, 18 volunteers logged 397.5 hours out at the refuge from May through early August. During this time, they

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward The Gull.

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CHRISTMAS COUNT SEASON from page 1

Treasure Island northeast to the San Pablo Reservoir in Contra Costa County and south to St. Mary's College in Moraga and the Oakland International Airport. With its wide variety of habitats, the Oakland count typically produces more than 170 species. The San Francisco count circle includes the north tower of the Golden Gate Bridge, all of San Francisco, and down the peninsula to San Bruno Mountain and the wetlands north of San Francisco International Airport. Also blessed with a wide variety of habitats, the San Francisco count generally records upwards of 160 species. Both counts have ranked among the top 25 nationwide in terms of numbers of species found.

"We want enough participants to cover every area well," says Dan. "Participants can search for birds from dawn to dusk—or longer if you look for owls, as many people do. We'll assign you to an area that suits your interests and your abilities, where you'll work with an experienced area leader. If you have only limited time, you can still help by spending a few hours noting birds around your house or your workplace, or in a nearby park. Yard watchers are wanted, too; some bird species, such as White-throated Sparrow, are found more often at feeders than elsewhere."

Golden Gate Audubon's two Christmas Counts are a popular tradition: Oakland usually attracts 150-plus field observers, and San Francisco more than 80. Both bird counts finish the day with a festive group dinner. Everyone is invited: field counters, yard watchers, and anyone else who wants to join the fun. "The dinners are a great way to end the day," says Dan. "There's good, healthy food and lots of it, and it's inexpensive, too. It's fun to share

We welcome all birders,
 no matter what their
 experience level.

Dan Murphy, CBC co-compiler

your experiences in the field, hear from the other count areas, learn how many species we recorded, and find out where the rare birds were found."

Golden Gate Audubon's volunteer hospitality coordinator Susanne Shields will plan and serve the dinners again this year. Susanne promises plenty of great tasting, nutritious food and desserts, ensuring that everyone goes home full of good food as well as memories of a good day of birding.

"Even if you are not able to participate in the count, especially in San Francisco on a workday, come and join in at the dinner to hear the results," urges Susanne. "The dinners are elegant bird-themed events to thank all birders for their contribution to Golden Gate Audubon."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you want to participate and need an invitation, call the Golden Gate Audubon office at 510.843.2222 to request one, or sign up at www.goldengateaudubon.org by clicking on the Christmas Bird Count link in the yellow box on the home page. For further information, call Dave Quady at 510.704.9353 or Bob Lewis at 510.845.5001 for the Oakland count or Alan Hopkins at 415.664.0983 for the San Francisco count.

Volunteers willing to help decorate, set up, serve, and clean up at dinners are also greatly appreciated. Please call Michael Martin at 510.843.7295 if you can assist. Hospitality Coordinator Susanne Shields can be reached at 415.810.4900.



Whimbrels, which winter along local shorelines, have been recorded on every Oakland count for the last 30-plus years, and on every San Francisco count since its inception in 1983.



CONSERVATION CORNER

PIER 94 WORKDAY

As part of our ongoing efforts to restore wetlands along San Francisco's southern waterfront, we'll hold a cleanup and planting at Pier 94 on Saturday, November 17, from 9 a.m. to noon. Over the past two years, thanks to Golden Gate Audubon volunteers, Pier 94 has been transformed from an abandoned industrial site to a functioning wetlands hosting a variety of birds. The site also has the world's largest population of California Sea-blite, a federally endangered wetlands plant. Help us continue our successes! Light refreshments will be provided to all who attend. Please contact Michael Martin, mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.7295, to sign up and for directions to the site.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

Saturday, November 3, 1 – 4 p.m.

Migratory bird habitat restoration and planting at East Wash, Lands End. Meet at the Lands End parking lot at the intersection of Pt. Lobos Ave. and Merrie Way, just above the Sutro Baths and the Cliff House, San Francisco. Please RSVP for the workday to both Michael Martin (mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.7295) and Caroline Christman (cchristman@parksconservancy.org).

Sundays, November 11, and December 9, 9 a.m. – noon

Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge workday. Come help us prepare habitat for the return of nesting California Least Terns next spring. Meet at the main refuge gate at the northwest corner of former Alameda Naval Air Station, Alameda.

Saturday, December 8, 9 a.m. – noon

Save the Quail habitat restoration workday at the Presidio. For specific work location, please contact Michael Martin. NOTE: Due to the holiday season, no quail habitat restoration workday will be held at Harding Park in December.

For more information, or for directions to any of the activity sites, please contact Michael Martin, mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.7295.

VICTORY FOR SEABIRDS AND MARINE MAMMALS

In early August, the California Coastal Commission voted unanimously to reject a proposal from the federal government that would have ended the 30-year ban on longline fishing along the California coast. Prior to the decision, Golden Gate Audubon had joined other environmental groups in submitting letters to the commission against the proposal. The California and Oregon

coasts are critical habitat for the endangered leatherback sea turtle and seabirds such as albatrosses. Longline fishing for swordfish and tuna indiscriminately kills or injures seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles by catching them in the thousands of hooks used by commercial vessels. Worldwide, 300,000 seabirds are killed each year by longline fishing. About 100,000 albatrosses are killed annually, threatening some species with extinction. Consumers can do their part to protect seabirds, sea turtles, and marine mammals by avoiding swordfish and tuna caught by longlines.

JOIN A GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Are you interested in becoming an advocate on behalf of Bay Area birds and wildlife? Golden Gate Audubon has three conservation committees whose members help protect critical habitat for local wildlife: the San Francisco Conservation Committee, the East Bay Conservation Committee, and the Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge.

Do you want to learn more? Attend a meeting to hear about all the activities and meet our dedicated volunteers. For a meeting schedule, please contact Eli Saddler, Golden Gate Audubon's conservation director, at esaddler@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.6551.

Countdown to the Restore-A-Thon

There's not much time left to sign up for this year's Restore-A-Thon, an annual event dedicated to enhancing native habitat for the California Quail and other species at the Presidio and Harding Park in San Francisco. If you contact us now, you can still join the enthusiastic volunteers who will turn out on Saturday, November 10, from 9 a.m. to noon.

These volunteers give generously of their time, but the project also relies on donations for its success. If you cannot participate by working in the field, you can assist us by making a contribution. When you sponsor a volunteer for three hours at \$15 per hour, you will be supporting the campaign with a \$45 contribution. If you can come on November 10, you can sponsor yourself and also ask family and friends to support your work. Donations like this provide much-needed funds for the program. To sign up or make a donation, call 510.843.2222 or go to www.goldengateaudubon.org.



Eleanor Bricetti

California Quail.

observed predator activity. Much of it was opportunistic, and refuge biologists believe that the volunteers were a vital deterrence in keeping the winged carnivores moving right along, past the tern colony. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is already stretched to its limits with other tasks so the staff cannot watch the refuge all day. The Tern Watch volunteers were thus very helpful both in observing predators that approached the colony and in assessing Least Tern behavior.

The upshot is that, from 394 nests this season, the mean estimate number of terns fledged was 200. Young terns, presumably from the colony, were seen outside the colony at the refuge and exploring nearby waters and roost areas. FAWR and Golden Gate Audubon thank all the volunteers who came out and worked three-hour shifts, from 5 a.m. until 8 p.m., to safeguard the colony.

As an added bonus, some Tern Watch volunteers spoke of how exhilarating it was to be out at the refuge before dawn, to hear birds chirping and find crepuscular parents busy fishing and feeding their young in the dawn light. Some found it a real privilege to witness Least Tern behavior during the various shifts and to learn the sounds in the colony.

Not all the news was positive. Refuge biologists found fledglings suffering from an unknown neurological disorder, demonstrating difficulty lifting their heads. The six



Duck pond at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge and view of San Francisco skyline.

Eleanor Briccetti

fledglings were brought to the International Bird Rescue Center in Cordelia, where they were tested for diseases, hydrated, fed, and given a vitamin B complex. Four fledglings revived so well that they were banded and returned to the colony, which greeted them with much vocalizing. They appeared to fledge and leave with the rest of the terns. Although we don't know if they will make it all the way to their wintering spots in Latin America, they seemed raring to go when they were last observed.

This wonderful refuge, with its many valued natural resources, is now threatened with a proposal by the Veterans Administration to develop at least 100 acres of refuge land within the habitat designated as critical to the Least Tern colony. The Veterans Administration would like to build a major hospital and relocate clinics now in Oakland, and construct a mausoleum for interring the remains of veterans. The plans would threaten the future of the California Least Terns and the other birds that depend on the refuge by encroaching on this sensitive habitat, as well as reduce the potential for the refuge as an open space for the City of Alameda.

Ben Miller and Leora Feeney, Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We need your help in asking the Veterans Administration to find another location for its facilities or to stop their plans for this ambitious project on the sensitive Alameda Wildlife Refuge site.

Ask Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums and the city council to help find a location for the VA facilities that honors our veterans without jeopardizing endangered California Least Terns: www.oaklandnet.com/government/council/city-officials.html

Ask the Alameda mayor and city council to help protect the endangered California Least Tern colony and open space for the City of Alameda: www.ci.alameda.ca.us/gov/city_council.html.

Contact Representative Barbara Lee and ask for her support for Alameda Wildlife Refuge: 202.225.2661. Contact Representative Pete Stark and ask for his support for the refuge: 202.225.5065.

Finally, you can join the Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge. This GGA conservation committee supports the refuge by conducting regular bird surveys and preparing the nesting site for the return of the Least Terns in spring. Come out and experience the refuge on the next workday, Saturday, November 11 (see page 3).



Great Blue Herons are among the 23 species known to nest at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge.

Eleanor Briccetti



SPEAKER SERIES

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m. At 7 p.m., delicious snacks are served by hospitality coordinator Susanne Shields. Speaker Series coordinator is Sarah Reed.

Countryside Living: Impacts to Wildlife and Watersheds

Dr. Adina Merenlender

Berkeley: Thursday, November 15

Exurban development—the subdivision of large, privately owned properties into smaller parcels for residential use—is one of the fastest-growing types of land use that is surrounding public lands and fragmenting wildlife habitat. The research by Dr. Adina Merenlender's laboratory group at the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management at the University of California, Berkeley, addresses the impacts of expanding exurbia on birds and other wildlife in California's oak woodlands and the North Bay wine country. For this talk, she will present evidence that exurban development is uniquely different from suburban development and can have substantial negative impacts on bird communities. Her research also reveals that low-density residential and vineyard development affects the quality of salmon spawning habitat more seriously than previously believed. To meet the goals of protecting salmon habitat and conserving bird species diversity, additional land conservation tools are needed to prevent the ongoing subdivision of wildlife habitat in the oak woodlands.

Dr. Adina Merenlender, an internationally recognized conservation biologist, has published more than 60 scientific articles focusing on the underlying relationships between land use and biodiversity and recently coauthored a practical guide to planning wildlife corridors, *Corridor Ecology: the Science and Practice of Linking Landscapes for Biodiversity Conservation*. For the past 15 years, she has worked with decision-makers to address the forces that influence loss of biodiversity.

Berkeley: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm

How Do Forest Service Roads Affect Birds?

San Francisco: Tuesday, November 27

As human populations and accompanying developments expand, human-caused disturbances play an ever-larger role in the health of wildlife populations. A growing number of studies have shown that human disturbances, such as motor vehicle traffic, can have harmful effects on birds. Most studies, however, concentrate solely on behavioral impacts, such as fleeing, changes feeding habits, and shifts in habitat use. Few studies have investigated physiological changes or show a clear link between disturbances and reproductive success in bird populations. Dr. Matt Dietz investigated the effects of U.S. Forest Service road traffic on the distribution, stress hormone levels, and nesting success of White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*) near the Rocky Mountain Biological Lab in Colorado. This research will help managers understand the effects of human disturbances and predict the impacts of land-management decisions.

Dr. Matt Dietz is conservation ecologist for the California/Nevada regional office of the Wilderness Society. His involvement in wildlife and wildlands conservation started 15 years ago at the Sierra Club in San Francisco. He received his PhD from University of Michigan and conducted field research on birds at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory. Dietz has also worked as a researcher for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Hawkwatch International, and Hastings Natural History Reservation in Carmel Valley, California.

San Francisco: County Fair Building, SF Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way. Directions: www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html



White-crowned Sparrow in the Rocky Mountains.

Matt Dietz

Start Your Holiday Shopping at the Speaker Series

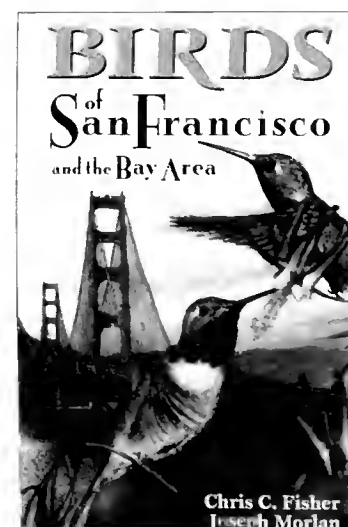
In November, a variety of items from Golden Gate Audubon's Nature Store will be available for sale at the Berkeley and San Francisco Speaker Series events. This is an ideal time to shop for holiday gifts for your bird-watching family and friends.

You'll find such indispensable resources as Joe Morlan and Chris Fisher's *Bird's of San Francisco and the Bay Area*, *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western North America*, the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, *The Birder's Handbook*, *San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching*, and John Kemper's *Birding Northern California*. If your list includes children, you'll want to check out the Audubon plush

bird toys, puzzles, and books geared to young birders.

You can also pick up 2008 calendars so you can plan next year's birding adventures.

If you are feeding birds in your backyard this season, you can purchase niger thistle for goldfinches and suet cakes for woodpeckers, chickadees, and other avian visitors.





For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake in Tilden

Berkeley

Friday, November 2, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,
philajane6@yahoo.com

Meet at parking lot at north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile stroll through this lush riparian area. We will look for winter residents and waterbirds. There is always the possibility of a surprise. Mark your calendar for the same trip on Friday, December 2.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Saturday, November 3, 10 a.m. – noon

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis,
SF Nature Education; Darin Dawson, SF
Botanical Garden Docent, 415.387.9160,
www.sfnature.org

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cosponsored by Botanical Garden, SF Nature Education, and Golden Gate Audubon.

Hayward Regional Shoreline

Alameda County

Saturday, November 3, 9 a.m. – noon

Rusty Scalf, 510.666.9936,
rfscalf@sbcglobal.net

Meet at the interpretive center for a walk along the shoreline trail. We will scout for returning shorebirds.

From I-880, take Hwy. 92 west and exit at Clawiter. Cross Clawiter, turn left onto Breakwater, and go to end to interpretive center and parking.

Napa River Birding Cruise

Sunday, November 4, 2007,

9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Bob Lewis, bob@wingbeats.org;
Dave Quady, davequady@att.net

If you've always wanted to see and bird the Napa River, this is your opportunity. The tide will be falling, and the birding should be great. The *Delphinus* will leave from and return to the Vallejo Marina. Bring lunch and appropriate clothing. Trip is limited to 28 participants. Cost is \$80 for Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members, \$90 for nonmembers. Reserve space by contacting Kristen Bunting, GGA office manager, 510.843.2222 or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org.

San Francisco Botanical Gardens

Sunday, November 4, 8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. The garden's micro-habitats attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

San Francisco Presidio

Sunday, November 4, 9 a.m. – noon

Andrew Kleinhesselink, 415.517.1725,
andy_kleinhesselink@hotmail.com

Bird the new Batteries to Bluffs Trail, which descends through lush native vegetation into some of the Presidio's densest and least disturbed habitat. The area supports the last known population of Wrentits in the Presidio and one of the last populations in San Francisco. The trail affords great views of rocky intertidal, beach, and coastal marine habitat. This means good chances to see a range of wintering birds including Common Loon, Red-throated Loon, Western Grebe, Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel, Surf Scoter, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Purple Finch. Maybe a Wrentit will make an appearance. Andrew Kleinhesselink of the Presidio Trust will discuss the habitat along this still inaccessible area. Project planners and supervisors from Trails Forever and the Parks Conservancy will be present to describe trail construction and steps taken to safeguard bird habitat.

Enter Presidio at 25th Ave. and Lincoln Blvd. gate. Drive north and up on Lincoln Blvd. past intersection

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Bob Lewis

Song Sparrow.

Tips for Going on a Field Trip

Birders of all levels are welcome on Golden Gate Audubon field trips. Trips may require walking on trails or uneven terrain, or birding in variable weather for several hours or more. For your comfort and safety, wear appropriate clothing and walking shoes. If you need information about a trip destination that is unfamiliar to you, contact the leader or field trips coordinator. Carpooling is recommended, especially for trips where participants will be caravanning to multiple locations.

Bicycle Trips

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233 (no calls after 9 p.m.),
kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Bicycle helmet required. Bring bicycle lock, lunch, and liquids. Dress for variable weather. Reservations not necessary but an email or phone call would be appreciated.

Transit schedules: www.transitinfo.org

Bay Trail info: <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov>

East Bay Regional Park District info: www.ebparks.org

Palo Alto Baylands

Santa Clara County

Sunday, November 4

Meet at 8:45 a.m. at Duck Pond at Palo Alto Baylands. We should find many species of birds on the bay, ponds, and sloughs. High tide is at 9:10 a.m., good for sighting rails. There are no hills on this trip in one of the best birding areas on San Francisco Bay. Much of the trip will be on paved trails and designated bike lanes, with some parts on gravel and some on roads. If the weather is good, we will bicycle to Mountain View Shoreline and Stevens Creek Trail, and return to the Duck Pond, making a loop. If the weather is bad, we will drive to some of the best viewing areas.

From Hwy. 101 in Palo Alto, take Embarcadero East exit. Follow Embarcadero to end and turn left on Harbor Rd. and follow signs.

San Leandro to Hayward on SF Bay Trail

Alameda County

Sunday, November 11

Meet at 10 a.m. at San Leandro BART and ride 3 miles to trailhead via Williams St. on bike lanes, or meet at 10:25 a.m. at San Leandro Marina Park. High tide is at noon, and shorebirds should be flushed in by the tide. We will bicycle along Bay Trail to Hayward Shoreline Regional Park and interpretive center, making a 14-mile round-trip excursion. First portion of trail is paved; remaining part easily negotiable. Rain cancels.

From I-880 in San Leandro, take Marina Blvd. exit (west) and in 1.4 mile turn left onto Monarch Bay Dr. Go to end to last parking lot at San Leandro Marina Park.

Redwood Shores to Foster City

San Mateo County

Saturday November 24

Meet at Hayward BART Station at 8:55 a.m. for ride on AC Transit M line bus to Foster City at 8:55 a.m. We should find birds on bay, lagoons, lakes, and sewer ponds. This circuit of Redwood Shores and Foster City is a flat loop on SF Bay Trail and other bike paths, mostly paved, and on bike lanes on city streets. Trip continues to midafternoon. Rain cancels.

Transit: Connecting BART train from MacArthur at 8:14 a.m. arrives at Hayward at 8:43 a.m. AC Transit bus arrives at Foster City Civic Center at 9:20 a.m. SF Bay Trail is a short distance from bus stop. Transit options for return include M line bus and Cal Train from Belmont connecting to BART at Millbrae. If you plan to take the bus, you must reserve a spot. Maximum 6 riders. **Car:** Exit Hwy. 92 onto Foster City Blvd. in Foster City. Go south 2 blocks to E. Hillsdale Blvd. and turn left toward bay. When road turns right and becomes Beach Park Blvd., park and walk across street to trail. Meet there at 9:35 a.m.



Bob Lewis

Marbled Godwits.

Coyote Hills via Alameda Creek and Quarry Lakes

Fremont

Saturday, December 8

Meet at 9 a.m. on east side of Fremont BART station for this all-day trip; return to BART is at about 3 p.m. We'll see birds from the time we step off train, and they vary according to the season. There are riparian, marsh, and bayside habitats. Total distance is about 24 miles, mostly on paved bike trails with very little uphill. We'll have a picnic lunch at Coyote Hills Visitor Center. Rain cancels.

From I-880 to Fremont, take Mowry Ave. exit east toward central Fremont and go 2.3 mi. on Mowry. Fremont BART parking lot is on east side of station past Civic Center Dr.

Arrowhead Marsh, Martin Luther King, Jr., Regional Shoreline

Oakland

Sunday, December 23

Meet at Fruitvale BART at 9:30 a.m. or at East Creek Point Trailhead at 9:50. We'll ride SF Bay Trail from East Creek Point to Damon Marsh and Arrowhead Marsh for the 10:35 a.m. high tide. Rain cancels bicycle trip but not birding trip. If rain is more than very light, meet at Arrowhead Marsh at 10 a.m.

Exit I-880 at High St. in Oakland and go southwest to High St. Bridge to Alameda. Cross bridge and turn left onto Fernside and park on street. Bike back over bridge, turn right onto Tidewater Ave. and go .25 mi. to East Creek Point trailhead on right. Lesser St. is just beyond on left. **In case of inclement weather:** From I-880 in Oakland, exit at Hegenberger Rd. and head west. Turn right onto Doolittle Dr. (Hwy. 61) and right again onto Swan Way, then left into Martin Luther King, Jr., Regional Shoreline; continue to end of road to parking lot.

FIELD TRIPS from page 7

with Kobbe and Washington. Look for sign on left for Langdon and turn right into large gravel parking lot on Lincoln across from sign. Meet leader in lot.

Upper San Leandro Reservoir

Saturday, November 10, 9 a.m. – noon

Bob Lewis, Rlewis0727@aol.com,
510.845.5001

Meet at Valle Vista Staging Area. Grassy hills, pines, oaks, and open water provide varied habitats for land birds and waterfowl. This a good trip for woodpeckers, wintering small birds like kinglets, nut-hatches, creeper, Western Bluebirds, and raptors. Rain cancels.

Take Hwy. 24 through Caldecott Tunnel and get off at Orinda exit. Turn right onto Moraga Way and go 4.8 miles to Canyon Rd, then turn right. Go about 1.2 miles to Valle Vista Staging Area on left and turn into parking lot lined with large Monterey pines.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, November 16, 8 – 10 a.m.

Charles Hibbard; Lewis Ellingham;
Margaret Goodale 415.554.9600 ext. 16,
mgoodale@randallmuseum.org

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We'll enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking the east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring the hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Berkeley Waterfront and Eastshore State Park

Friday, November 23, noon – 4 p.m.

Anne Hoff, 510.845.5908, anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

Meet behind Sea Breeze Market at corner of University Ave. and Frontage Rd., west of I-80. We will bird Berkeley Meadow, now part of Eastshore State Park. Depending on amount of rainfall before trip, there may be seasonal ponds with waterfowl and gulls. At Cesar Chavez Park, we'll look for Burrowing Owls and waterbirds. We'll explore the marina area, stop in the spots where tall trees attract kites and wintering songbirds, and look for scoters and loons from the Berkeley pier. Finally, as the ebbing tide exposes the mudflats south of

University Ave., we'll head east to check for shorebirds, gulls, and ducks. Most of walk is on paved or gravel trails/roads. Heavy rain cancels.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland

Wednesday, November 28,

9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Meet at large spherical cage near Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. Come see Lakeside reaching its peak this year with most of the birds that summer in the Arctic disporting themselves in our relatively warm waters. We should see Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes and Greater and Lesser Scaups.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking at boathouse lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellvue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

GOLDEN EAGLE (\$1000 AND MORE)

Susan Consey; Morgan Stanley (90th Anniversary), Miles and Mel McKey (90th Anniversary), Santa Clara Valley Audubon (Altamont Pass Conservation Planning Effort), Starbucks Coffee Company (90th Anniversary)

PEREGRINE FALCON (\$500 TO \$999)

Laura Baker & Lewis Lubin: California Native Plant Society (90th Anniversary), Brian & Kathleen Bean (90th Anniversary), Mount Diablo Audubon (Altamont Pass Conservation Planning Effort), The San Francisco Foundation (90th Anniversary), Grey & Laura Spivy

LEAST TERN (\$200 TO \$499)

Audubon California (90th Anniversary), Amanda M. Hamilton (90th Anniversary), Barbara Hill: California State Parks Foundation (90th Anniversary), Bob & Hannelore Lewis, Mike & Ann Richter, Noreen Weeden

CLIFF SWEEP (\$100 TO \$199)

Courtney S. Clarkson & Roy Leggitt III (90th Anniversary), Dan Eisenstein, Leora & Coleman Feeney (90th Anniversary), Patricia Greene, Patricia D. Gunther, Nancy S. Hair (90th Anniversary), Jerome & Michele Harrison, Lewis & Elizabeth Land (90th Anniversary), David A. Loeb & Diane Poslosky (90th Anniversary), Germaine Long, Carl & Carol Maes (90th Anniversary), Elizabeth Yates McNamee and Tom McNamee (90th Anniversary), Mark A. Mushkat,

John & Hortensia Nelson (90th Anniversary), Al & Barbara Peters (90th Anniversary), Mike & Ann Richter (90th Anniversary), Nancy Skinner & Lance G. Brady (90th Anniversary), John H. Ware, Catherine L. Whiteside

GIFT (\$1 TO \$99)

Christian F. Alexanderson, William Barnaby, Carl Baxter (90th Anniversary), Pam Belchamber (90th Anniversary), Dr. Walter & Nancy Berger (90th Anniversary), Eric Biber (90th Anniversary), Rev. Sally G. Bingham (90th Anniversary), John B. Bowers & Linda Stevens (90th Anniversary), Mark Briggs (90th Anniversary), Berry Brosi (90th Anniversary), Dolores Butkus (90th Anniversary), Peter & Eugenia Caldwell (90th Anniversary), Mary Cantini & Richard Norkin (90th Anniversary), Nancy Tisdale Clark (90th Anniversary), Karola Craib, Reba Davis (90th Anniversary), Judith L. Dunham & Charles Denson (90th Anniversary), Paul & Elizabeth Eisenhardt (90th Anniversary), Seth Feinberg (90th Anniversary), Steven W. Frank & Heidi Petersen (90th Anniversary), Elaine Kijek Geffen (90th Anniversary), Ursula K. Heise, Keith J. Horrocks & Bill Hudson (90th Anniversary), William E. Hoskins, Hazel H. Houston (90th Anniversary), Glenn & Patti Itano, Steve E. Johnson, Marilyn R. Kinch, Joan Lamphier: Audubon Canyon Ranch (90th Anniversary), Lexis Nexis Cares, Martha A. Maricle (90th Anniversary), Judy McAllister & Bill Hinshaw: Save Open Space-Gateway Valley (90th Anniversary), Frances McKinnon, Mara. K. & Don Melandry (90th

Anniversary), Amy Meyer (90th Anniversary), Daniel & Joan Murphy (90th Anniversary), Glenn & Charlene Nevill (90th Anniversary), Christine Okon (90th Anniversary), James S. & Susie Otagiri, Jean M. Perata & Dennis Davison (90th Anniversary), Tamsen Plume: Holland & Knight (90th Anniversary), Lory Poulson, James W. & Phyllis Ross (90th Anniversary), Robert Spertus, Elizabeth Talmadge (90th Anniversary), Mike Tekulsky & Ron Wong (90th Anniversary), Terri Thomas: Presidio Trust (90th Anniversary), Steven C. Volker & Christine Cordi (90th Anniversary), Catherine Walker (90th Anniversary), Rich Walkling (90th Anniversary), Noreen Weeden & Eddie Bartley (90th Anniversary), Carolyn West, Dionne R. Wrights

IN KIND

Donations for the 90th Anniversary: Bushnell Outdoor Products, Capay Organics, Hog Island Oyster Company, Bob Lewis, Market Bar, Tom McNamee, Oro Azul

IN MEMORY OF

Helen Raschko Maas: Helen's cousins: Elizabeth, Carol, Gail & their families
James McCracken: Carol Toms
Patricia Maureen Casey: Don & Ann Hughes

GRANTS

The Flora Family Foundation: Eco-Oakland Program
The Dean Witter Foundation: Membership Development Program



Pelagics and shorebirds and warblers, oh my!

LOONS TO DUCKS

September is prime time for pelagic birding, and 4 boats went out of Bodega Harbor, SON, led by RSt on the 2nd and 23rd and by DS on the 7th and 30th. The Sep. 7 trip documented a Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus*). The Sep. 23 trip got great photos of a Short-tailed Albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*), along with sightings of a Laysan Albatross and a Short-tailed Shearwater. Storm-Petrel flocks included high counts of 20 Wilson's and 4,000 Ashy on the 7th and 5 Fork-tailed and 400 Black on the 14th. A Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) remained at the SE Farallon Islands, SF (DW). Beginning on the 14th, a 2nd Brown Booby at Salt Pond A11, DENWR, provided much better viewing and a 2nd SCL record (CMo, MM, RJ; mob).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

On Sep. 24, observers at Doran Park, Bodega Harbor, SON, observed an immature Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) (DMK, RH, JW). The Stilt Sandpiper flock at New Chicago Marsh, DEWNR, SCL, maxed out at 9–13 birds on the 9th (Dave Weber). A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper joined the shorebirds at San Leandro Marina, ALA, on the 21st (BR). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper remained at Heron's Head in SF through the 5th (mob). On the 1st, 6 Buff-breasted Sandpipers were tallied at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS (DDS). At Oro Loma Sanitary District treatment pond, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper Sep. 23–30 may be the just the 3rd ALA record (SG, MSm; ES, BR, MSt).

A Laughing Gull at Drake's Beach, PRNS, appeared healthy on the 15th but was found dead on the 27th (BM; mob). A 1st year Franklin's Gull trolled the Kennedy Park duck pond in Napa, NAP, on the 24th (LK). Notable Sabine's Gull sightings included a single individual at L. Hennessey, NAP, Sep. 11–21 (MBe; mob) and 5 juveniles on the DENWR Salt ponds on the 29th (MR, RJ). Tern watchers reported



Arctic Tern.

2 Arctic Terns at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, on the Sep. 20th (KH) and a Black Tern at Hayward RS, ALA, Sep. 24–26 (BR; ES, KP). The Sep. 14 pelagic trip discovered 2 Xantus's Murrelets, while the Sep. 2 trip recorded 91 Tufted Puffins.

DOVES TO THRASHERS

This month's rarity at the Wildlife Gallery in Bolinas, MRN, was a Broad-tailed Hummingbird on the 12th (KH). *Empidonax* migrants included 3 Least Flycatchers at Tolay L. RP, SON (AL, DE; PC), PRNS Lighthouse (RSt), and Hayward RS (BR). An intern discovered a White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) at PRBO's Palomarin Field Station, PRNS, on the 13th (TG; KH, oob). On the 18th, a Philadelphia Vireo joined the chickadee flock at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach, SM (RT). Visitors to outer PRNS in mid-September were rewarded with 2 Townsend's Solitaires (JC,

RR; EP), a Brown Thrasher (CMR; RH), and a Red-throated Pipit (KH).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Outer PRNS lived up to its billing as a world-class fall vagrant trap by hosting a Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*) at the Lighthouse on the 9th and a Worm-eating Warbler (*Helminthos vermivorus*) at Junior Mendoza on the 22nd (RSt). Regionally, warbler migration reached a crescendo with reports of 6 Tennessee, 9 Chestnut-sided, 4 Magnolia, 2 Cape May, 2 Black-throated Blue, 2 Blackburnian, 1 Prairie, 9 Palm, 12 Blackpoll, 4 Black-and-White, 1 Hooded, and 2 Canada Warblers, along with 10 American Redstarts, an Ovenbird, and 5 Northern Waterthrush.

A juvenile Black-throated Sparrow was reported on the 9th from Bass L., PRNS (MBo, fide KH). Solo Lapland Longspurs were heard flying over Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach, SM, on the 23rd (AJ) and skulking on Mt. Trashmore at Hayward RS, on the 29th (BD). A Bobolink turned up on the 11th along ALA Cr., ALA (JS). A Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) on the 9th was a remarkable discovery among the blackbird flocks at Spaletta (C) Ranch, PRNS (RSt). Female Baltimore Orioles were discovered on the 22nd and 23rd, first at Putah Cr., SOL (TE, JS) and then along Pescadero Cr., SM (RT). Also on the 23rd, banders at SE Farallon Island, SF, determined that a Carpodacus finch in the mist nets was in fact an Asian-vagrant Common Rosefinch (*C. erythrurus*) (MBr).

See Birding Record for details on a complete listing of all the bird sightings.

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater and Janet Collins for assistance in compiling data.

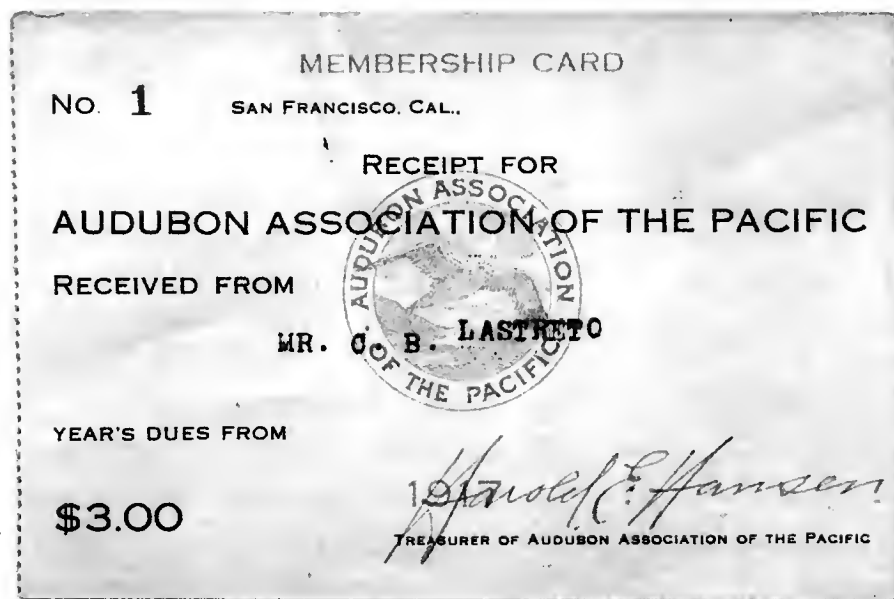
Abbreviations for Observers: AH, Alan Hopkins; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; AL, Andy Lacasse; BD, Bob Dunn; BK, Bill Keener; BM, Bruce Mast; BR, Bob Richmond; CM, Carol Miller; CMo, Clyde Morris; DDS, Dave DeSantes; DE, Daniel Edelstein; DG, Daniel George; DMK, Dave MacKenzie; DS, Debra Shearwater; DW, Dave Wimpfheimer; EP, Eric Pilote; ES, Emilie Strauss; JC, Josiah Clark; JS, John Sterling; JW, Jim White; KH, Keith Hansen; KP, Kathy Parker; LK, Larry Kent; MBe, Murray Berner; MBo, Malcolm Boothroyd; MBr, Matt Brady; MD, Matthew Dodder; MM, Mike Mammoser; MR, Mike Rogers; MSm, Mark Smith; MSt, Maury Stern; PC, Peter Colasanti; RC, Rita Colwell; RH, Roger Harshaw; RJ, Richard Jeffers; RR, Ruth Rudesill; RSc, Rusty Scalf; RSt, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SG, Steve Glover; SR, Steve Rottenborn; TE, Todd Easterla; TG, Thomas Gardali.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; CP, County Park, Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; DENWR, Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge; EEC, Environmental Education Center; FOS, first of season; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L., Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRBO, Pt Reyes Bird Observatory; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SFBO, SF Bay Bird Observatory; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant.

Golden Gate Audubon— 90 Years of Environmental Activism

The celebration of Golden Gate Audubon's 90th anniversary on October 11 featured a display highlighting our achievements over nine decades. Excerpted here are portions of the time line accompanied with selected illustrations.

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library/University of CA, Berkeley



1917

A group of local birders establish the Audubon Association of the Pacific for the purpose of enjoying, studying, and protecting birds. At the first meeting, January 25, Carlos B. Lastreto, a local businessman, is elected president.

1917–1920

The Association learns that tankers are discharging crude oil near the Farallon Islands, with devastating consequences for seabirds. President Lastreto and Barton Evermann, director of the California Academy of Sciences, work with oil companies to curb the dumping of this waste oil. In 1920 Standard Oil, Union Oil, and Associated Oil complete onshore tanks that permit the recycling of oil, eliminating the need to discharge it at sea.

1919

The Association publishes the first issue of *The Gull* to announce programs, field trips, bird observations, and conservation initiatives.

1920

In January the Association inaugurates a census of waterfowl on Lake Merritt in Oakland, held annually through the mid-1950s.

1928–1930

Overseeing the state bird campaign in Northern California, the Association gathers more than half of the 135,299 votes cast. The winner is the California Quail.

1936

Roger Tory Peterson gives his first lecture at an Association meeting, two years after publication of his seminal book *Field Guide to the Birds*.

1948

The Association becomes a chapter of the National Audubon Society. A year later, members approve changing the name to the Golden Gate Audubon Society.

1962

Golden Gate Audubon joins Marin Audubon in setting up a foundation to protect Audubon Canyon Ranch, and helps raise the annual installments necessary to complete the purchase.

1971–1973

Golden Gate Audubon supports the acquisition of Point Pinole for public parkland and gives a substantial contribution to the East Bay Regional Park District toward the purchase.

1974–1975

Preventing development at south Richmond's Hoffman marsh and mudflat is among Golden Gate Audubon's most important initiatives. After advocacy by members and others in the community, the City of Richmond decides to protect the area.

1975

Golden Gate Audubon protests the unauthorized filling of the bay for the Emeryville harbor and proposes that, as mitigation, acreage in the Emeryville Crescent be dedicated to bird habitat. At year's end, the City of Emeryville designates most of the crescent as open space.

1978

Shoreline Park, a 14-acre ribbon of shoreline on Bay Farm Island, opens to the public after a decade of advocacy by Save Our Shoreline, Golden Gate Audubon, and other activists.

1978–1994

Golden Gate Audubon publicizes the work of the Mono Lake Committee to reverse water diversions that are threatening to deplete the lake and destroy bird habitat. Funds raised by GGA members go toward the cost of lawsuits by the Mono Lake Committee and National Audubon. In 1994 the State Water Resources Control Board adopts a management plan for stabilizing the lake's water level and restoring the feeder streams and wetlands.

1979

A portion of the Alameda shoreline is named the Elsie B. Roemer Bird Sanctuary, in honor of the Golden Gate Audubon member who helped conserve this and other local bird habitats. GGA establishes a conservation award in her honor, the Elsie Roemer Conservation Award.

1981

Thanks to a large bequest from Rachel Makower, Golden Gate Audubon establishes a Sanctuary Fund to help purchase critical wildlife habitat and improve access for observing wildlife.

1985

Golden Gate Audubon joins the Eastshore State Park Coalition, a group seeking to create a continuous shoreline park from Emeryville to Richmond.

1986–1995

Golden Gate Audubon takes legal action to prevent the filling of wetlands next to Arrowhead Marsh at Oakland's Martin Luther King, Jr., Shoreline. In 1995 GGA wins a settlement requiring the Port of Oakland to restore 70 acres of seasonal wetlands.

1990

A contribution from Golden Gate Audubon's Sanctuary Fund goes toward the purchase of West Marin Island and East Marin Island, which support nesting herons and egrets, as well as waterfowl and shorebirds. The islands and adjacent tidelands become a national wildlife refuge.

1993–1999

Golden Gate Audubon convinces the Port of San Francisco and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission to fund creation of a wetland at Pier 98 on the city's southern bayside waterfront. The restored wetland, Heron's Head Park, opens to the public in 1999.

1994

A symposium sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon addresses the future of Alameda's colony of endangered California Least Terns after the decommissioning of the Naval Air Station. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requests roughly 575 acres of land and 375 acres of water to create the Alameda National Wildlife Refuge. Three years later, Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, a GGA conservation committee, is formed to advocate for the creation of the refuge.

1998

Golden Gate Audubon's Save the Quail campaign begins with habitat restoration work in the Presidio and monitoring of the quail during breeding season. Five years later, the first annual Restore-A-Thon is held to raise funds and restore native quail habitat in San Francisco parks.

1999

Golden Gate Audubon launches environmental education programs that introduce schoolchildren to local birds and habitats at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Regional Shoreline and the Alameda Wildlife Refuge. This effort grows into the ongoing Eco-Oakland Program.



Student on an Eco-Oakland field trip to Alcatraz studying the Brandt's Cormorant colony.

2004

After 16 years of negotiation, Golden Gate Audubon wins protection for Gateway Valley in Orinda, a vital link in a continuous 20-mile corridor of open space and wildlife habitat stretching from Castro Valley in Alameda County to San Pablo in Contra Costa County.

A coalition including Golden Gate Audubon obtains funds to restore the Yosemite Slough watershed in San Francisco's Hunters Point. GGA works with Literacy for Environmental Justice to complete a survey of the area's birds and other wildlife.

Golden Gate Audubon collaborates with the Port of San Francisco to reclaim salt marsh habitat at Pier 94 on the city's southern bayside waterfront. In 2006 volunteers colonize a federally endangered plant, the California Sea-blite.

2005

A report analyzing Golden Gate Audubon's five-year census of birds at Arrowhead Marsh and the restored 72-acre wetland at Martin Luther King, Jr., Regional Shoreline shows the wetland to be one of the most successful Central Bay restoration projects.

2006

To coincide with the official opening of the Eastshore State Park, Golden Gate Audubon publishes a checklist of the park birds based on a census by volunteers.

2007

After three years of legal action, Golden Gate Audubon wins the strongest protections to date for the 4,700 birds killed annually by wind turbines at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area. The wind industry is required to reduce illegal bird kills by half and craft a conservation plan to reduce bird kills further over the long term.

Golden Gate Audubon begins working with the North Richmond Shoreline Academy to involve the local community in the conservation of the shoreline and a census of the bird life.

Give a Gift that Helps Local Wildlife

This holiday season, present your nature-loving friends and family members with a Supporting Membership in Golden Gate Audubon—a gift they will enjoy the whole year. Fill out the form below and return it to our office, or order a gift membership by calling 510.843.2222. If the recipient is already a member, consider making a donation in his or her name. You can also sign up for a Supporting Membership or give a donation by going to our website: www.goldengateaudubon.org.

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<input type="radio"/> I would like to include a donation to support GGA's conservation, education, and birding programs.		CITY / STATE / ZIP		CITY / STATE / ZIP	
		PHONE (H) / PHONE (W)		PHONE (H) / PHONE (W)	
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The Gull is the newsletter of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. As a Supporting Member of Golden Gate Audubon, you receive a subscription to *The Gull*, a 10 percent discount on items purchased at our Nature Store, and the satisfaction of supporting local conservation efforts. Local members of the National Audubon Society are encouraged to join Golden Gate Audubon directly. Contact our office at 510.843.2222 for details.

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